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EUROPEAN BRIEF 198-75.4

D. PORTUGAL: THE EXTENSION OF THE WAGE FREEZE ANNOUNCED

BY THE PORTUGUESE CABINET ON WEDNESDAY IS ONLY AN ECONOMIC HOLDING

ACTION, BUT IT WILL MAKE LABOR MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO COMMUNIST

EXPLOITATION. NON-COMMUNIST FORCES, HOWEVER, HAVE HAD SOME SUCCESS

IN WEAKENING THE COMMUNISTS' GRIP ON THE ORGANIZED LABOR MOVEMENT. Y

THE CABINET EXTENDED THROUGH FEBRUARY THE SUSPENSION OF LABOR
CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS THAT WAS IMPOSED AFTER THE NOVEMBER 25
MILITARY UPRISING WAS SQUASHED. THE SUSPENSION EFFECTIVELY FREEZES
WAGE RATES PENDING DEVELOPMENT OF MORE SOPHISTICATED CONTROLS.
WAGE CONTROLS ARE NEEDED TO HELP PRIVATELY OWNED AND NATIONALIZED
FIRMS OVERCOME SERIOUS FINANCIAL PROBLEMS THAT STEM IN LARGE PART
FROM THE EARLIER GOVERNMENT POLICY OF HOLDING DOWN PRICES WHILE
PERMITTING WAGE HIKES AND FORBIDDING WORKER DISMISSALS. THE
GOVERNMENT HAS NOT, HOWEVER, ANNOUNCED THE STIFF INCOMES POLICY

3 OR PRICE INCREASES THAT MANY HAVE EXPECTED.Y

THE SOLE COMMUNIST IN THE CABINET HAS BEEN LESS VOCAL THAN
THE POPULAR DEMOCRATS, BUT REPORTEDLY HAS REQUESTED THAT THE

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MEASURES BE GIVEN FURTHER STUDY BEFORE THEY ARE PROMULGATED. BOTH FARTIES ARE HESITANT TO SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR FORCING HARDSHIPS ON THE FOPULATION, PARTICULARLY NOW THAT THE CABINET HAS ANNOUNCED THAT LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS MUST BE HELD BY APRIL 25, 1976.4

AZEVEDO IS WELL AWARE THAT STRICT AUSTERITY MEASURES WILL BE UNPOPULAR AND THAT RESULTING UNREST COULD THREATEN THE STABILITY OF HIS GOVERNMENT. IN A NATIONALLY BROADCAST CHRISTMAS MESSAGE ON THESDAY, HE TRIED TO IMPRESS ON THE PEOPLE, AND ESPECIALLY ON LABOR, THE SEVERITY OF PORTUGAL'S ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES. HE STRESSED THAT ECONOMIC RECOVERY DEPENDS ON A "SOLID AGREEMENT" BETWEEN THE UNIONS AND THE GOVERNMENT ON AN INCOMES POLICY AND SAID THAT UNLESS PRODUCTION INCREASES, PORTUGAL WILL FACE AN ECONOMIC CATASTROPHE.Y

ONE BRIGHT NOTE ON THE OTHERWISE GLOOMY ECONOMIC SCENE WAS 4FINANCE MINISTER ZENHA'S ANNOUNCEMENT ON TUESDAY THAT PORTUGAL 3WILL BE ALLOWED TO DRAW SOME \$85 MILLION FROM THE INTERNATIONAL 2MONETARY FUND. WHILE THE SUM IS ROUGHLY EQUIVALENT TO ONLY ONE 1 MONTH'S PAYMENTS DEFICIT AT RECENT RATES. IT GIVES LISBON A

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BIT MORE TIME TO PUT PORTUGAL'S INTERNATIONAL PAYMENTS IN ORDER.

THE PORTUGUESE HAVE BEEN NEGOTIATING FOR SOME TIME FOR DRAWING

RIGHTS UNDER THE IMF'S OIL FACILITY. TALKS BOGGED DOWN WHEN THE

PORTUGUESE REFUSED TO AGREE TO SOME IMF TERMS, INCLUDING A DEVALUATION OF THE ESCUDO. DETAILS OF THE NEW AGREEMENT ARE NOT YET

AVAILABLE. 4

ZENHA, A SOCIALIST PARTY LEADER, CITED THE ARRANGEMENT AS

PROOF THAT GREATER POLITICAL STABILITY SINCE THE NOVEMBER 25 UPRISING IS OPENING THE DOOR TO INCREASED OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE. HE BLAMED
THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE ECONOMY OVER THE PAST 20 MONTHS ON
THE COMMUNISTS. AZEVEDO TOOK THE SAME LINE IN HIS CHRISTMAS
MESSAGE, PREDICTING ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT IF POLITICAL STABILITY

CONTINUES. HE CLAIMED TO SEE SOME FAINT SIGNS ALREADY OF AN
ECONOMIC UPSWING. HE REFUSED TO WISH THE PEOPLE A PROSPEROUS

4 NEW YEAR, HOWEVER, SAYING THAT WOULD BE NOTHING BUT DEMAGOGUERY

3 SINCE "ONLY A MIRACLE COULD MAKE IT SO." (CONFIDENTIAL)+

THE PAST WEEK IN THE APPARENT HOPE OF ENCOURAGING THE LESS RADICAL

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SOCIALIST LEADERS AND ISOLATING THE COMMUNISTS.4

MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR MANUEL FRAGA IRIBARNE MET WITH THE LEADER OF THE POPULAR SOCIALIST PARTY, TIERNO GALVAN-A MOVE WITH-OUT PRECEDENT UNDER FRANCO. ALTHOUGH THE POPULAR SOCIALISTS ARE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNIST-COMINATED DEMOCRATIC JUNTA, TIERNO GALVAN HAS ANGERED THE COMMUNISTS BY REFUSING TO CONDEMN KING JUAN CARLOS OUT OF HAND. TIERNO GALVAN REPORTEDLY FOUND FRAGA "RECEPTIVE" AND SAID IN A SUBSEQUENT PRESS INTERVIEW THAT HE BELIEVED THE GOVERNMENT WAS MOVING IN A POSITIVE DIRECTION, ALTHOUGH HE NOTED THAT ITS PROMISES HAVE YET TO BE TRANSLATED INTO DEEDS. Y

FOR HIS PART, FRAGA SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE A UNITED SOCIALIST ORGANIZATION FORMED FROM THE VARIOUS FACTIONS THAT DO NOT BELONG TO THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY—THE LARGEST SOCIALIST GROUP. HE SAID THAT THE MAIN PURPOSE OF HIS MEETING WITH TIERNO BALVAN HAD BEEN TO ENCOURAGE SUCH A COALITION AND TO WEAN THE SOCIALIST LEADER AWAY FROM THE COMMUNISTS.4

FRAGA WAS NOT TOALLY UNSUCCESSFUL. SOON AFTER THE TWO

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LEADERS' MEETING, TIERNO GALVAN ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF A
SOCIALIST CONFEDERATION TO INCLUDE HIS OWN POPULAR SOCIALISTS AND
VARIOUS REGIONAL SOCIALIST PARTIES AFFILIATED WITH THE DEMOCRATIC
JUNTA. THE PARTICIPATING GROUPS ARE REPORTEDLY OPPOSED TO THE
YOUNGER AND MORE RADICAL LEADERSHIP OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY,
WHICH THEY FEAR IS INCREASINGLY UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF COMMUNIST
LEADER SANTIAGO CARRILLO.Y

THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO GRANT AN AMNESTY TO EXILED

SOCIALIST LEADER RODOLFO LLOPIS MAY BE A FURTHER INDICATION OF

GOVERNMENT PLANNING TO UNDERCUT THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY.

LLOPIS SAYS HIS GROUP REPRESENTS THE TRADITIONAL RIGHT WING OF THE

SOCIALISTS, AND HE ADAMANTLY OPPOSES COOPERATION WITH THE COMMUNISTS.

HE REPORTEDLY WILL RETURN TO SPAIN IN JANUARY, WHEN HE MAY TRY TO

REVIVE HIS OLD ALLIANCE WITH TIERNO GALVAN.Y

THE SOCIALIST FACTIONS WILL FIND IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO

RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES AND COMPETE WITH THE SOCIALIST WORKERS

PARTY, THE MAJOR NON-COMMUNIST FORCE ON THE SPANISH LEFT AND THE

ONLY SPANISH PARTY RECOGNIZED BY THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL. THE

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3. PORTUGAL: NON-COMMUNIST FORCES IN PORTUGAL, FIRMLY IN

CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT SINCE THE UPRISING BY LEFTIST PARATROOPERS

ON NOVEMBER 25, ARE TRYING HARD TO END THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S

DOMINANT POSITION IN ORGANIZED LABOR-Y

THE COMMUNISTS HAVE DOMINATED LABOR-MAINLY AS A RESULT OF

ADROIT MANEUVERING RATHER THAN POPULAR APPEAL SINCE SHORTLY AFTER

THE CAETANO REGIME WAS OUSTED IN APRIL 1974. THE PARTY HAD BEEN

THE ONLY OPPOSITION POLITICAL GROUP TO MAINTAIN AN EFFECTIVE UNDER
GROUND ORGANIZATION DURING NEARLY 5D YEARS OF RIGHTIST DICTATORSHIP.

AFTER APRIL 1974. THE COMMUNISTS WERE ABLE TO TAKE OVER THE STATE'S

LABOR MACHINE AND REPLACE THE GOVERNMENT HACKS IN IT WITH YOUNG

THE COMMUNISTS MOVED TO FORMALIZE THEIR PREEMINENT POSITION

WHEN THE OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES BEGAN TO COMPETE WITH THEM IN

INDIVIDUAL UNIONS. THE COMMUNISTS STRONGLY SUPPORTED THE UNITARY

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LABOR LAW PROMULAGTED IN APRIL 1975 AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS OF HEATED

DEBATE. UNDER THE LAW, A SINGLE LABOR CONFEDERATION—THE INTERSIND—

ICAL—IS GIVEN THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO AFFILIATE WITH INTERNATIONAL

LABOR ORGANIZATIONS.4

EVEN THOUGH THE SOCIALISTS AND OTHER NON-COMMUNISTS COULD NOT BLOCK THIS LEGISLATION, THEY DID MANAGE TO SECURE THE ADOPTION OF SEVERAL PROVISIONS TO LESSEN ITS IMPACT-INCLUDING FREEDOM FOR UNIONS NOT TO JOIN THE CONFEDERATION AND A REQUIREMENT THAT SECRET BALLOTS BE USED IN ELECTIONS FOR UNION LEADERSHIP. THESE PROVISIONS, COUPLED WITH THE NON-COMMUNISTS' VICTORY IN THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTION IN APRIL 1975, ENABLED THE NON-COMMUNISTS TO PICK UP SUPPORT FROM MANY UNIONS.Y

IN SEVERAL UNION ELECTIONS THE SOCIALISTS JOINED FORCES WITH THE FAR-LEFTIST, ANTI-COMMUNIST REORGANIZING MOVEMENT OF THE 4PROLETARIAT PARTY AND GAINED CONTROL OF MOST WHITE COLLAR UNIONS.

3THE COMMUNISTS RETAIN THE ADVANTAGE AMONG BLUE COLLAR WORKERS, SPARTICULARLY IN THE LISBON INDUSTRIAL AREA.4

ALTHOUGH IT HAS SUFFERED SETBACKS IN RECENT MONTHS, THE

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COMMUNIST PARTY STILL HAS ENOUGH STRENGTH WITH LABOR TO MAKE

TROUBLE FOR A GOVERNMENT THAT IS FIGHTING TO STAVE OFF ECONOMIC

COLLAPSE. FED ON COMMUNIST SLOGANS SINCE APRIL 1974, PORTUGUESE

WORKERS HAVE COME TO EXPECT MORE PAY FOR LESS WORK.Y

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT IF FOREIGN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE IS NOT RECEIVED SOON, THE SEVERE ECONOMIC RESTRICTIONS THEY
WILL BE FORCED TO ADOPT WILL PROVOKE LABOR UNREST AND PERHAPS TIP
THE POLITICAL BALANCE BACK IN FAVOR OF THE COMMUNISTS. A VERY
TIGHT FOREIGN EXCHANGE SITUATION THREATENS TO BRING THINGS TO A
HEAD EARLY NEXT YEAR, WHEN RESERVES ARE EXPECTED TO RUN OUT.Y

BEFORE THE NOVEMBER 25 UPRISING, THE COMMUNISTS-WITH MINIMUM REPRESENTATION IN THE GOVERNMENT-MANAGED TO PARALYZE THE GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE EFFECTIVE USE OF WORKERS. ON ONE OCCASION, COMMUNIST-LED CONSTRUCTION WORKERS BESIEGED PRIME MINISTER AZEVEDO'S RESIDENCE AND FORCED HIM TO RETREAT ON WAGE CONSTRAINTS. THE COMMUNISTS ARE OBVIOUSLY HOPING FOR A REPLAY.Y

A NEW CONSTITUTION IS BEING DRAFTED BY THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.
IN WHICH NON-COMMUNISTS HAVE THE MAJORITY. DRAFT ARTICLES APPROVED

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BY THE ASSEMBLY IN OCTOBER PROVIDE FOR THE FREE FORMATION OF LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AT ALL LEVELS AND THE RIGHT TO AFFILIATE WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.Y

THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY HAS ALSO SANCTIONED ANOTHER TYPE OF LABOR ORGANIZATION-THE WORKERS' COMMISSION-AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED UNIONS. COMMISSIONS WOULD SERVE A LIAISON FUNCTION FOR MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNMENT, WITH THE UNIONS RETAINING RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS. THE COMMISSIONS WOULD REPRESENT THE WORKERS OF AN ENTIRE COMPANY, WHEREAS THE SAME **£CONFID**-- CONDINI STARAGES OF OF SE SA YNAM SA SAH THEIM YNAGMOD. ENTIALTY

PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU'S SPEECH TO THE ROMANIAN ROMANIA: THURSDAY WAS HIS MOST IMPORTANT FOREIGN POLICY PARLIAMENT LAST STATEMENT SINCE THE ELEVENTH PARTY CONGRESS LAST YEAR. BOTH 4THE TIMING AND CONTENT OF THE SPEECH, WHICH FOLLOWED THE WARSAW PACT FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING IN MOSCOW, WERE CLEARLY INTENDED TO DISPEL ANY IMPRESSION THAT BUCHAREST HAS MODIFIED ITS INDEPENDENT THE SPEECH REFLECTED CEAUSESCU'S INTENTION TO CONTINUE POLICIES.

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SLANTING ROMANIAN POLICY AND IDEOLOGY TOWARD THE THIRD WORLD.

INDEED, CEAUSESCU'S RARE USE OF A PARLIAMENTARY, RATHER THAN PARTY FORUM FOR THE SPEECH MAY
HAVE BEEN A SUBTLE WAY OF TRYING TO IDENTIFY MORE
CLOSELY WITH THE NONALIGNED WORLD. HE MAY ALSO
HAVE BELIEVED THAT A REVIEW OF FOREIGN POLICY BEFORE PARLIAMENT WOULD BE MORE CONSISTENT WITH THE
HELSINKI GUIDELINES.Y

ALTHOUGH CEAUSESCU'S SPEECH CONVEYED AN AIR

OF CONFIDENCE AND DETERMINATION, HE DID NOT BREAK

NEW GROUND. NEITHER DID HE PROVIDE MUCH SOLACE TO

THE SOVIETS. FOR EXAMPLE, HE REITERATED BUCHAREST'S

INSISTENCE THAT PARTY RELATIONS AVOID "DEAD DOGMAS"

OR A "DIRECTING CENTER" FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COM
4 MUNIST MOVEMENT. HE URGED RESPECT FOR THE DIVER
3 SITY OF ALL PARTIES AS WELL AS THE RIGHT OF EACH

2 PARTY TO SET ITS OWN LINE, SINGLING OUT FOR PRAISE

"CERTAIN WESTERN COMMUNIST PARTIES" THAT HAVE

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SOUGHT NEW FORMS TO DEAL WITH CHANGED CONDITIONS.

ON THE EUROPEAN CONFERENCE OF COMMUNIST PARTIES,

CEAUSESCU STRESSED THE NEED FOR A "DEMOCRATIC MEETING" WITH OPEN DEBATE, FREE EXCHANGES OF IDEAS IN

A SPIRIT OF MUTUAL RESPECT, AND NO BINDING DOCUMENTS.Y

CEAUSESCU NONETHLESS BLANDLY REASSURED MOSCOW

OF ROMANIA'S LOYALTY TO CEMA AND THE WARSAW PACT.

HE ASSERTED THAT ROMANIA WOULD CONTINUE TO COOPERATE

WITH THE ARMIES OF ITS ALLIES EVEN AFTER THE DISSO
LUTION OF MILITARY BLOCS. WITH AN EYE ON THE YUGO
SLAVS AND CHINESE, HOWEVER, HE ALSO STRESSED THAT

ROMANIA WILL COLLABORATE WITH THE ARMIES OF NON
PACT SOCIALIST COUNTRIES.Y

AS FOR CEMA, CEAUSESCU GAVE EQUAL WEIGHT TO

BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL ECONOMIC TIES. HE CAL—

LED FOR A REDUCTION IN THE DEVELOPMENT GAP BETWEEN

CEMA MEMBER STATES AND, IN AN INDIRECT REFERENCE TO

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CHINA AND YUGOSLAVIA, POINTED OUT THAT ROMANIA DOES

CONSIDERABLE BUSINESS WITH SOCIALIST COUNTRIES OUT
SIDE CEMA.Y

CEAUSESCU STRONGLY SUPPORTED THE PROPOSAL OF

GREEK PREMIER CARAMANLIS FOR EXPANDED COOPERATION

IN THE BALKANS. FURTHERMORE, HE DENIED THAT BALKAN

COOPERATION WAS "DIRECTED AGAINST ANYONE", I.E.

MOSCOW.Y

IN AN UNPRECEDENTED CRITICISM OF THE UN CEAUSESCU IMPLICITLY TOOK ISSUE WITH THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION DENOUNCY & ZIONISM BY SAYING THAT
SOME UNJUST DECISIONS AND MEASURES HAD BEEN ADOPTED
THAT CONTRADICT THE SPIRIT OF THE UN CHARTER. HE
FAVORED SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED NATIONS GAINING A
4 GREATER VOICE IN THE UN AND A REVISION OF THE CHAR3 TER THAT WOULD REFLECT THE CHANGES IN INTERNATIONAL
6 LIFE OVER THE LAST 3D YEARS. (CONFIDENTIAL) E-2 IMPDET.H

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ECUADOREAN PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ LARA REPORTEDLY HAS PLACED
HIS ARMY COMMANDER UNDER HOUSE ARREST FOR PLOTTING AGAINST HIM.

THE GOVERNMENT IS INVESTIGATING TO DETERMINE WHO ELSE IS INVOLVED, AND FURTHER ARRESTS MAY BE PLANNED.//

//RODRIGUEZ IS SAID TO HAVE RECEIVED THE RESIGNATIONS OF ALL HIS MINISTERS ON DECEMBER 24, AND SOME POSTS MAY CHANGE HANDS AS HE SEEKS TO ENSURE THE LOYALTY OF KEY OFFICIALS.//

THE PRESIDENT. DE (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM)//

//DESPITE THESE MOVES, RODRIGUEZ'S ABILITY TO REMAIN IN

OFFICE REMAINS QUESTIONABLE. HE DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE THREATENED

IMMEDIATELY, BUT

CONSPIRATORS WITHIN THE MILITARY CONTINUE TO MANEUVER AGAINST

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DETERIORATE, DESPITE HER GOVERNMENT'S SIGNIFICANT ANTI-GUERRILLA VICTORY.//

//PRESSURE ON THE ARMED FORCES TO INTERVENE IS GROWING. NOTWITHSTANDING THE CONVICTION OF TOP MILITARY LEADERS THAT THE TIME IS NOT YET RIPE. THE ARMY COMMANDER, GENERAL JORGE VIDELA- AND HIS COLLEAGUES HAVE NO CLEAR SOLUTION TO ARGENTINA'S PROBLEMS, AND THEY APPARENTLY FEAR THAT A NEW ERA OF MILITARY RULE COULD BE AS UNSUCCESSFUL AS EARLIER EXPERIMENTS. NEVERTHELESS. HARDLINERS WITHIN THE MILITARY WHO SEE A DIRECT TAKE-OVER AS THE ONLY WAY TO AVOID CONTINUING ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CHAOS ARE BOUND TO BE ENCOURAGED BY THE EROSION OF POPULAR SUPPORT FOR THE PERONISTS AND THE APPARENT LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE ABILITY OF CIVILIAN POLITICIANS TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO THE COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS.//

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//VIDELA REFLECTED ARMED FORCES DISSATISFACTION WITH

THE PRESIDENT IN A CHRISTMAS EVE SPEECH IN WHICH HE ISSUED A

SHARP WARNING TO HER GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THAT ANGER WITHIN THE

SERVICES COULD BE ATTRIBUTED TO MISGOVERNMENT. CORRUPTION. AND

A LACK OF NATIONAL LEADERSHIP. THE ARMY CHIEF TOOK ANOTHER

SWIPE AT PERON BY SENDING A TELEGRAM TO ONE OF HER BITTER

ENEMIES—THE PERONIST GOVERNOR OF BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE—

CONGRATULATING HIM FOR HELPING TO CRUSH TUESDAY NIGHT'S GUERRILLA

ATTACKS. THE GOVERNOR. WHO HAS BEEN MENTIONED AS A POSSIBLE

SUCCESSOR TO PERON. WAS RECENTLY OUSTED FROM THE PERONIST PARTY

FOR ADVOCATING HER REMOVAL.

//CONGRESSIONAL DEMANDS FOR A CHANGE IN THE EXECUTIVE BY
CONSTITUTIONAL MEANS ARE CERTAIN TO BE STEPPED UP IN THE WEEKS
AHEAD. LEGISLATORS INTRODUCED A MOTION YESTERDAY CALLING FOR
PERON'S IMPEACHMENT. THE LIKELIHOOD FO A CIVILIAN POLITICAL
SOLUTION IS DWINDLING, HOWEVER. UNLESS THE POLITICIANS ACT

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MIDDLE EAST AFRICA BRIEF 198-75.4

LEBANON: THE HOLIDAY LULL IN FIGHTING CONTINUED INTO THE WEEKEND, IN PART BECAUSE OF FREEZING RAINS AND GALE-FORCE WINDS.Y SNIPING AND OCCASIONAL HEAVY EXCHANGES OF FIRE CONTINUED TO MAKE THE STREETS OF BEIRUT UNSAFE, BUT TRIPOLI AND ZAHLAH.

WHERE HEAVY FIGHTING TOOK PLACE EARLY LAST WEEK, WERE QUIFT.Y

BEIRUT RADIO ANNOUNCED ON SATURDAY THAT PRIME MINISTER

KARAMIN'S SUPREME COORDINATION COMMITTEE, WHICH INCLUDES

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE VARIOUS WARRING FACTIONS AS WELL AS

LEBANESE SECURITY OFFICIALS, HAD AGREED ON A TIMETABLE FOR

ENFORCING THE CURRENT CEASE—FIRE OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS. THE

LEBANESE NEWS MEDIA ALSO CONTINUED THEIR SPECULATION THAT A

POLITICAL SOLUTION, APPROVED BY SYRIA, WAS NEAR AND WOULD

GRANT AT LEAST SOME OF THE DEMANDS OF THE MUSLIM FORCES FOR

4 REFORMS IN THE PRESENT POLITICAL SYSTEM, WHICH FAVORS THE

3 CHRISTIANS.Y

THERE IS NO INDICATION AS YET THAT THE LATEST AGREEMENT WILL BE ANY MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THE OTHER CEASE-FIRES WORKED DATE:
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EAST ASIA BRIEF 198-75.4

CHINA-USSR∢ AMICABLE CHINESE HANDLING OF THE RELEASE SATURDAY OF THREE SOVIET HELICOPTER CREWMEN IS STARTING, GIVEN THE HITHERTO SOUR STATE OF SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS AND THE BITTERNESS THE HELICOPTER INCIDENT INITIALLY CAUSED ON BOTH SIDES. THE GESTURE IS THE MOST CONCILIATORY MOVE PEKING HAS MADE TOWARD MOSCOW SINCE PREMIER KOSYGIN WAS BRIEFLY INVITED TO CHINA IN 1969.4

THE SOVIET CREWMEN HAD BEEN HELD INCOMMUNICADO SINCE THE HELI-COPTER WENT DOWN IN NORTHWESTERN CHINA NEAR THE SOVIET BORDER IN SATURDAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT STATED THAT CHINESE INVESTIGA-MARCH 1974. TORS HAD CONCLUDED THAT THE BORDER INTRUSION HAD BEEN UNINTENTIONAL. PEKING HAD INITIALLY CHARGED THAT THE SOVIET CREW WAS ENGAGED IN AN ESPIONAGE MISSION.Y

DESPITE SOVIET EFFORTS TO GAIN THE CREW'S RELEASE THROUGH 4 DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE, PROPAGANDA, AND THREATS TO RETALIATE, THE ECHINESE MAINTAINED A STORY SILENCE IN PUBLIC, WHILE INSPIRING 2 DIPLOMATIC RUMORS THAT THE CREWMEN WOULD BE BROUGHT TO TRIAL. THE LIDESCRIPTION IN SATURDAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE HELICOPTER AS AN

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"ARMED RECONNAISSANCE" MODEL MAY HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO JUSTIFY THEIR LENGTHY DETENTION. YL

IN AN ESPECIALLY TELLING GESTURE, A SENIOR CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL GAVE A DINNER FOR THE SOVIET AIRMEN BEFORE THEIR RELEASE. PEKING HAD NEVER BEFORE ACCORDED SUCH TREATMENT TO FOREIGN NATIONALS WHO HAD BEEN DETAINED FOR ANY REASON. THIS APPEARS TO BE AN IMPORTANT SYMBOLIC ACT, BUT THE REASONS FOR ITS TIMING ARE NOT YET CLEAR. THE LONG CHINESE PUBLIC SILENCE ON THE HELICOPTER AFFAIR SUGGESTS THAT HANDLING OF THE MATTER MAY HAVE BEEN A CONTENTIOUS ISSUE WHICH ONLY NOW HAS BEEN RESOLVED. 4

THERE HAVE BEEN HINTS FOR NEARLY TWO YEARS THAT SOME FAIRLY IMPORTANT CHINESE LEADERS MAY HAVE BEEN ARGUING IN FAVOR OF A LESS ABRASIVE POLICY TOWARD MOSCOW, PRESUMABLY ON THE GROUNDS THAT CHINA'S CURRENT APPROACH IS TOO DANGEROUS. THERE HAVE BEEN NO 4RECENT SIGNS, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH A DEBATE HAS COME TO A HEAD, AND IN BFACT EXCHANGES BETWEEN PEKING AND MOSCOW IN THE PAST SIX OR EIGHT 2 MONTHS HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY SHARP.Y

//IN THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS THE CHINESE HAVE ALSO INDICATED

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THEIR CONCERN THAT THE US HAS NOT BEEN PROPERLY STANDING UP TO THE THE IMPLICATION IS THAT PUTATIVE US PASSIVITY LEAVES THE RECENT ACTION ON ANGOLA BY THE US CHINESE INCREASINGLY EXPOSED. SENATE UNDOUBTEDLY HAS FURTHER HEIGHTENED CHINA'S CONCERN'ON THIS IN ADDITION, PEKING'S RELEASE OF THE AIRMEN MAY BE INTENDED MATTER. AS A SIGNAL TO THE US THAT SINO-US RAPPROCHEMENT DOES NOT INDEFINITELY PRECLUDE SOME IMPROVEMENT IN SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS; THE CHINESE MAY BE PARTICULARLY ANXIOUS TO MAKE THIS POINT AT A TIME WHEN THEY PERCEIVE THAT THEIR ATTACKS ON DETENTE AND SALT SEEM TO BE HAVING LITTLE OR NO EFFECT ON WASHINGTON.//Y

//AT A MINIMUM THE CHINESE PROBABLY ALSO HOPE TO COMPLICATE SOVIET EFFORTS TO USE THE ANTI-CHINA THEME IN CONNECTION WITH MOSCOW'S EFFORTS TO CONVENE AN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST CONFERENCE IN THEY MAY ALSO HOPE TO COMPLICATE SECRETARY KISSINGER'S 1976. 4 DIALOGUE WITH MOSCOW . / / Y

THE RELEASE OF THE HELICOPTER CREW REMOVES AN IMPORTANT IRRITANT ZIN SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS, BUT A HOST OF OTHERS REMAIN. A SENIOR ESOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL PUBLICLY REVEALED TWO WEEKS AGO ,

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